IODE Group of Experts on Biological and Chemical Data Management and Exchange Practices (GE-BICH)

Ad hoc Session
IOC Project Office for IODE
Ostend, Belgium
25 October 2012
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For bibliographic purposes this document should be cited as follows:

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**ANNEXES**

I. Agenda
II. List of Participants
1. OPENING OF THE SESSION

1.1. WELCOME

The meeting was opened by Hernan Garcia. He recalled that this was an *ad hoc* meeting. Its purposes was to get to know the new members and to get an appreciation for their work in their country. In addition the objective was to review of the GE-BICH-V work plan and to identify any new issues that might need the attention of IODE-XXII (March 2013).

1.2. INTRODUCTION OF PARTICIPANTS

It was recalled that the membership had been renewed following IOC Circular Letter 2369 in April 2011. The new membership is available from [http://www.iode.org/index.php?option=com_oe&task=viewGroupRecord&groupID=61&Itemid=49](http://www.iode.org/index.php?option=com_oe&task=viewGroupRecord&groupID=61&Itemid=49). They now include:

1. Hernan GARCIA (Co-Chair), Oceanographer (Chemical), long-term member (USA)
2. Sergey KONOVALOV (Co-Chair), Head of department, long-term member (Ukraine)
3. Nihayet BIZSEL, Professor, Long-term member (Turkey)
4. Klaas DENEUDT, Project manager Data Centre, Long-term member (Belgium)
5. Laure DEVINE, Data manager, Long-term member (Canada)
6. Salim MOHAMMED, Senior Lecturer, Long-term member (Tanzania)
7. Toru SUZUKI, General Manager, Long-term member (Japan)
8. Yanxia ZHOU, Long-term member (China)

Ms Bizsel informed the meeting that she is involved in research in phytoplankton ecology and toxic species, after working in physical and chemical oceanography.

Mr Deneudt informed the meeting that he has been active in the VLIZ data centre for about 10 years. Initially involved in the general tasks of the NODC (archiving of data originating from different projects) and he is now involved mainly in European projects contributing to projects like FP6 MARBEF, setting up the EurOBIS data system and building a data portal for EMODNET’s biology lot. In addition he has become involved in the LifeWatch ESFRI infrastructuire where VLIZ contributes for Flanders. It aims to support research into biodiversity and ecosystem studies for both marine and terrestrial environments. His contribution to GE-BICH will focus on biological data and more specifically, referring to the GEBICH-V work plan, on vocabularies for biological data.

Ms Devine informed the meeting that she is data manager at her lab and she splits her time between CTD data QC and data archaeology recovering data. She is part of a national group and she promotes QC in other labs.

Mr Konovalov informed the meeting that he works at the department of marine biochemistry. He is also involved in assessment of quality of data, i.e. QC.

Mr Garcia informed the meeting that he works at the US-NODC. He is a chemical oceanographer, interested in ocean biochemical cycles and in ocean chemical climate basin-scale variability. This is his main focus at the NODC. The GE-BICH can provide guidance to the community in terms of chemistry and biology.

Mr Suzuki informed the meeting that his interest is data synthesis ocean carbon and CO$_2$. He works with ocean carbon community and the PACIFICA project. He also collaborates in GLODAP-II. He is also interested in surface ocean carbon (SOCAT project).
Ms Chandler informed the meeting that she has been working on QC with GEBICH. She works on a NSF projects helping researchers to get data in a database and online, including documenting the data. They handle full range of biogeochemistry data from research cruises and laboratory data, model results and synthesis products.

Mr Sun informed the meeting that he is a physical oceanographer by training. He started out in ocean and coastal dynamics and numerical modeling (nowcast). At US-NODC he focused on physical data management. He then became involved in GTSP and became Chair in 2007.

All members had been invited to the ad hoc meeting. No response had been received from Mr Salim Mohammed (Tanzania). Ms Yanxia Zhou (China) had responded to inform that she could not come for the meeting due to financial and time limitations. In addition the meeting welcomed Ms Cyndy Chandler. The list of participants of the meeting is added as Annex II.

Mr Garcia informed the meeting that he communicated with Ms Yanxia Zhou. Her focus is QC and she has set of procedures that she would contribute. No information was received from Mr Mohammed. The meeting expressed concern about this and instructed the Secretariat to contact the Head of Institution of IMS to inquire whether Dr Mohammed would be in a position to participate in the GE-BICH.

Mr Garcia suggested considering the number of members and how they can contribute to the work of the Group. He noted that we currently do not have a member from Latin America, Australia.

Mr Pissierssens pointed out that all Member States had been in a position to nominate members. He pointed out that members can still identify experts that can be invited as “invited experts”. Members can suggested such experts to the Secretariat.

1.3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The meeting adopted the agenda as added in Annex I. The meeting also took note of the working documents including the agenda and the “Report of the IODE Group of Experts on Biological and Chemical Data Management and Exchange Practices (GE-BICH)“. Mr Konovalov also referred to the GE-BICH-V summary report (IOC/IODE-BICH-V/3).

1.4. GE-BICH AND ITS TASKS

This agenda item was introduced by Mr Konovalov. He recalled the objectives of the GE-BICH as follows:

“The group’s overall objective is to help develop standards for oceanographic biological and chemical data management and exchange, and improve the quality and quantity of chemical and biological data available to end users."

and the mission as:

“To promote greater integration of biological, chemical and physical data within IODE’s network of national data centres in support of biogeochemical research, and ecosystem studies and management."

He then recalled the terms of reference as documented on [http://www.iode.org/bich](http://www.iode.org/bich)

- To provide an international forum, raising awareness about new initiatives, best practices, and emerging standards for biological and chemical data management and exchange practices;
• To collate and compile guidelines, supporting the integrated management and quality control of biological and chemical data in IODE’s network of national oceanographic data centres;
• To contribute to the development of standards, controlled vocabularies, and recommended practices for the management, interoperability and exchange of biological and chemical data, supporting the scientific and operational requirements of the community;
• To encourage data centres to compile inventories of past and present biological and chemical data holdings, and make data available to global databases and specialised data portals;
• To encourage data holders to contribute data to data centres for the creation of regional and global integrated oceanographic databases incorporating physical, chemical and biological data;
• To communicate the results from the GE to the wider community of data managers, providers and users.

GE-BICH is requested to keep:

• the close collaboration developed with OBIS within the new arrangements that will be decided on,
• close relations with relevant IOC programmes such as HAB, IOCCP and GOOS, as well as other organizations and programmes including FAO, ICES, PICES, CIESM, ICSU, SeaDataNet.

Mr Pissierssens noted the difficulty in getting closer collaboration with eg GOOS which was an old problem that has still not been resolved. Probably IODE needs to get closer to the research community. In this regard he informed the meeting about the proposal to establish a new type of IODE “entity” (IODE Specialized Ocean Data Centre (IODE-SODC)) that will be proposed at IODE-XXII. This will include research groups, institutions, and projects. Possibly through this additional stakeholder group more awareness can be created for IODE and its activities in other communities such as GOOS, etc.

Mr Garcia stated that GEBICH needs to make a concerted effort and strategy to increase its interaction with existing national and international projects.

Mr Pissierssens noted that this strategy must be demand-driven. GE-BICH cannot operate in isolation. This can be done through the new stakeholder group SODC who will be able to identify needs and community these to IODE and GEBICH.

Mr Garcia pointed out that there is currently no top-to-bottom approach. We need to promote our advice to the management level.

Mr Konovalov noted that we need to better promote IODE expertise within the EU as often expertise is re-invented.

Mr Garcia stated that we need to make bridges where possible. This Group should devote a great amount of time in how to link to other groups and activities. So we can approach these groups and introduce ourselves and identify their needs and our response to these needs.

Mr Konovalov suggested that information on eg FP project opportunities should be shared also within GEBICH.
2. INTERSESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

2.1. STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GE-BICH-V WORK PLAN

(Recommendation IODE/GE-BICH-V)

This agenda item was introduced by Mr Konovalov. In this regard he referred to the report of the “IODE Group of Experts on Biological and Chemical Data Management and Exchange Practices (GE-BICH), Fifth Session, IOC Project Office for IODE, Oostende, Belgium, 17-20 January 2011” and “Report of the IODE Group of Experts on Biological and Chemical Data Management and Exchange Practices (GE-BICH), Twenty-first Session of the IOC Committee on International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange (IODE-XXI), Liège, Belgium, 23-26 March 2011”.

The GE-BICH wiki (https://sites.google.com/site/gebichwiki/home) was successfully setup in 2009 and was used regularly by the group and its collaborators to discuss the planned activities, to report on issues discussed during the sessions, to present work in progress as well as finalized reports and recommendations, to get feedback from the scientific community, and to provide links to external activities related to GE-BICH Terms of References. The wiki was active until 2011. After that little activity was seen.

**Action**: update contact information

The compilation of lists of vocabularies related to biogeochemical data collection and analysis in the ocean has begun (see GE-BICH V report and https://sites.google.com/site/gebichwiki/vocabularies-2)

Mr Konovalov then recalled the GE-BICH-V work plan as detailed in Document IOC/IODE-XXI/12 and the wiki https://sites.google.com/site/gebichwiki/: 

Status: At this moment only Gwen Moncoiffé and Hernan Garcia can manage the wiki. It was also reported that it is difficult to update. In addition it has not been updated for over a year.

**Action**: Mr Appeltans offered to take over the management and administration of the wiki - https://sites.google.com/site/gebichwiki/

1. Work on vocabularies and ontologies for biological and chemical data management and exchange with the following specific tasks:

   Task 1.1 – complete compilation and submission of plankton sampling gears;
   
   Status: partially done
   
   **Action**: continuation by N. Bizsel and L. Devine

   Task 1.2 – complete submission of water samplers;
   
   Status: Partially done, continuation by H. Garcia

   Task 1.3 – continue compilation of information related to chemical sensors and analysers, chemical methods, in situ imaging systems via the wiki;
   
   Status: partially done
   
   **Action**: continuation by H. Garcia

   Task 1.4 – complete compilation and submission of non-taxononomic group names;
   
   Status: partially done
   
   **Action**: continuation by K. Deneudt
Task 1.5 – complete a thesaurus of life cycles and life stages names, and identify recommended names for data exchange;
   Status: partially done
   Action: continuation by W. Appeltans. Mr Appeltans informed the meeting that EMODNET is developing a more extensive vocabulary. He recommended to expand the focus of this Task. It was recommended to revise the GEBICH-V work plan accordingly.

Task 1.6 – Liaise with Roy Lowry to facilitate the submission of the Device vocabulary to ODS;
   Status: not done
   Action: S. Konovalov will follow up with Gwen Moncoiffé.

Task 1.7 – initiate a review of selected usage parameter code definitions
   Status: not done
   Action: Mr Konovalov will contact Ms Moncoiffé for more information.

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2- Work on QA/QC procedures

Task 2.1 – complete actions arising from the 1st QA/QC workshop and the submitted QF scheme including work on developing quantitative and objective test criteria, as well as other criteria (for example, data processing history) that have to be reported;
   Status: next version of proposal was prepared during the 2nd Workshop: Second IODE Workshop on Quality Control of Chemical and Biological Oceanographic Data Collections, Oostende, Belgium, 22-24 October 2012 (see http://www.iode.org/index.php?option=com_oe&task=viewEventRecord&eventID=1022)
   Action: to be followed up by S. Konovalov

Task 2.2 – set up a working group on the standardization of measurement units reporting and, when possible, usage;
   Status: identified number of units
   Action: see also item 13 in agenda item 3.1 – H.Garcia, S. Konovalov and K. Deneudt.

Task 2.3- contact lead author of (Hydes et al 2010: Recommendations for the Determination of Nutrients in Seawater to High Levels of Precision and Inter-Comparability using Continuous Flow Analysers) to clarify minimum requirement for reporting nutrient data.
   Status: done by H. Garcia
   Action: none

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3- Collaboration with IPHAB on the development of the Harmful Algal Information System (HAIS)

Task 3.1 – Dr Vanden Berghe to contact Mr Enevoldsen to discuss ways and means to enhance collaboration;
   Status: cooperation has been established
   Action: ongoing (W. Appeltans)

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4- Collaboration with GE-OBIS

Task 4.1 – contact the ICES zooplankton working group to seek collaboration on exchange standards related to abundance data;
   Status: unknown. GE-OBIS has not yet met.
Action: to be taken up by W. Appeltans and K. Deneudt

Task 4.2 – contact the GE-MIM Chair regarding access to a reference list for institutes and scientific organisations names for usage in OBIS;
Status: not done
Action: recommend to GE-MIM to discuss this item at GEMIM-XII (January 2013)

5- Provision of and access to biological and chemical data via the Ocean Data Portal
Task 5.1 – compile a detailed document including recommendations based on the presentations made at GE-BICH V on the survey of the provision of and access to biological and chemical data via the SDN and ODP portals;
Status: done and circulated to SDN and ODP chairs. Responses received (Reference: Document “SURVEY ON PROVISION OF/ACCESS TO CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL DATA via SDN and ODP portals”, January 2011)
Action: no action needed

Task 5.2 - seek comments and feedback from the SDN and ODP technical teams regarding the results of the survey;
Status: done
Action: no action needed

Task 5.3 – compile information on initiatives related to the development of a netCDF convention for biological and chemical data;
Status: not done
Action: to be continued by H. Garcia, K. Deneudt

Task 5.4 - contact IOOS and chair SG-ODP regarding development and adoption of a netCDF convention for biological and chemical data;
Status: not done
Action: H. Garcia to talk to IOOS. Contact with SG-ODP not relevant at this time.

6- Contribution to Ocean Teacher
Task 6.1 – inter-sessional working group to (i) identify topics that should be added in the OT library relevant to the scope of GE-BICH; (ii) enter content in the OT library; (iii) check the quality of existing content in the OceanTeacher library relevant to GE-BICH;
Status: not done
Action: inter-sessional working group to be re-established with following membership: H. Garcia, S. Konovalov, L. Devine; Tasks to be implemented. Content can be transferred from wiki to OceanTeacher digital library. Inter-sessional working group to include Claudia Delgado.

Task 6.2 - participate in the upcoming meeting of the SG-OT, to be held in Miami in April 2011
Status: Done
Action: no action needed

3. NEW ACTIONS FOR THE 2012-13 WORK PLAN

3.1. THE WAY FORWARD

Reference was made to the GE-BICH-V work plan and its status of implementation as detailed under agenda item 2.1.

Mr Garcia called for new issues or ideas from GEBICH members. The following were identified:
1- Suggest recommended data QC tests and mapping to 1st level QF for basin scales for T, S, nutrients + O$_2$ (L. Devine, H. Garcia, S. Konovalov) – The group decided that this idea could be implemented as part of the current GEBICH plan.

2- Explore possibility of adapting GTSSP 2 level QC scheme to chemical and biochemical data (C. Sun) – The group decided to revisit this idea in 2013.

3- EUROBIS Biology section on wiki on QC steps for data validation of species observations related to OBIS (W. Appeltans, K.Deneudt) – The group decided that this idea could be implemented as part of the current GEBICH plan (tentative completion by December 2013)

4- Extension/expansion of task 1.5 (building vocabs for all kinds of species attributes) (W. Appeltans, K.Deneudt) – The group decided that this idea could be implemented as part of the current GEBICH plan (tentative completion by December 2013)

5- Digital library (catalogue) of books, links and references for marine species identification guides (W. Appeltans et al) – IDENTIFY POSSIBLE PARTNERS, CONTACT GE-MIM (NOT NOW BUT START INITIAL CONTACTS NOW)

6- Online community expert review group for plankton – Develop a list of scientists willing and able to serve as review experts (species identification) (N. Bizsel) – Investigate overlap IOC/HAB; The group decided that this idea could be implemented as part of the current GEBICH plan.

7- Update the GE-BICH wiki – One content admin, many editors (W. Appeltans, H. Garcia) - The group decided that this idea could be implemented as part of the current GEBICH plan.

8- Make us more relevant in the present project oriented community. Develop list of organizations and projects that GE-BICH is engaging with or should engage with and add to wiki (H. Garcia et al) - The group decided that this idea could be implemented as part of the current GEBICH plan.

9- GE-BICH to provide a venue for community review of species distribution maps OBIS. (W. Appeltans) - Explore external funding by GE-BICH-VI.

10- Ocean Acidification metadata + access to integrated Ocean Acidification/carbon data from ships, experiments, models (H. Garcia) - The group decided that this idea could be implemented as part of the current GEBICH plan. Identification of data products and applications for biological and chemical data (S. Konovalov) – pre-study by GE-BICH-VI

11- Develop controlled vocabulary for chemical and biological data (K. Deneudt) – Explore external funding by GE-BICH-VI

12- Develop guidelines for specifying variable units and reference conversion between units, significant figures, data uncertainty for data exchange (H. Garcia et al) - The group decided that this idea could be implemented as part of the current GEBICH plan. (tentative completion by December 2013)

13- NetCDF template for measured chemical and biological data and metadata (H. Garcia) The group decided that this idea could be implemented as part of the current GEBICH plan (tentative completion by December 2013)
3.2. DISCUSSIONS

The meeting requested that the 6th Session of GE-BICH should meet early 2014 either in USA or at the IOC Project Office for IODE, Oostende. Funding is requested to IODE-XXII to organize the meeting.

4. REPORT ON THE QUALITY FLAG (QF) SCHEME STANDARD FOR OCEANOGRAPHIC AND MARINE METEOROLOGICAL DATA EXCHANGE

The Co-Chairs informed the meeting that a new version of the QF scheme proposal had been prepared after extensive discussions. It would be submitted to the ODS process as soon as possible. Detailed information is available in IOC Workshop Report No. 253.

5. CLOSURE

The GE-BICH Co-Chairs closed the meeting on 25 October 2012 at 16h00.
ANNEX I

AGENDA

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

   1.1 Welcome
   1.2 Introduction of participants
   1.3 Adoption of the agenda
   1.4 GE-BICH and its tasks

2. INTERSESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

   2.1 Status of implementation of the GE-BICH work plan
   2.2 Proposal of Transition from ODS Pilot Project to the Joint JCOMM/IODE ODS Project

3. NEW ACTIONS FOR THE 2012-2013 WORK PLAN

   3.1. The way forward
   3.2. Discussions

4. REPORT ON THE QUALITY FLAG (QF) SCHEME STANDARD FOR OCEANOGRAPHIC AND MARINE METEOROLOGICAL DATA EXCHANGE

5. CLOSURE
ANNEX II

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